

# CubeQuest CHALLENGE



**What's the Cube Quest Challenge?**

**Jim Cockrell**

**Cube Quest Challenge Administrator**

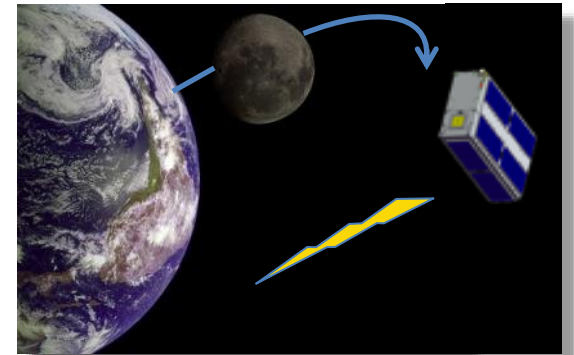
**Small Satellite Conference – August 6, 2016**



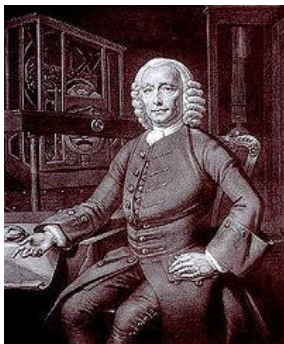
# What's this Talk About?



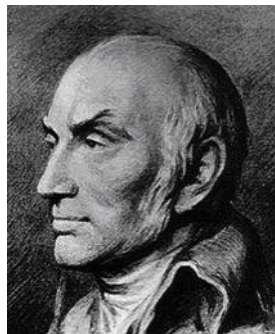
- What are Challenges?
- What is NASA's Centennial Challenges?
- Why a Cube Quest Challenge?
- What is Cube Quest? Who is Eligible?
- What is EM-1?
- How do they get on EM-1?
- What is the current status?



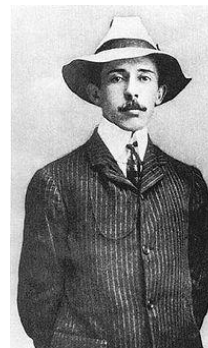
# What are Challenges?



In 1761, John Harrison (clock maker) solved the British maritime navigation challenge



In 1809, Nicolas Appert (baker) solved the Napoleon challenge for food preservation



In 1901, Alberto Santos-Dumont (coffee plantation heir) won the French airship challenge



In 1910, Georges Chavez (pilot) won the Milan Committee challenge being the first to fly over the Alps

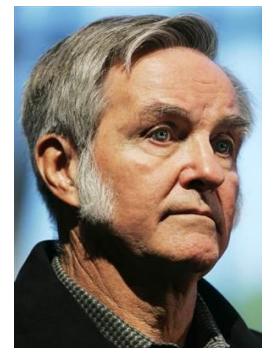


In 1927, Charles Lindbergh (mail pilot) won the Orteig Prize being the first to fly across the Atlantic Ocean

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In 1977 & 1979, Paul MacCready (aeronautic engineer) won the Kremer Prizes for human-powered flight challenges



In 2004, Burt Rutan (aerospace engineer) won the X-Prize Ansari challenge being the first private entity to enter space twice within two weeks



In 2007, Peter Homer (unemployed engineer) won the NASA Astronaut Glove challenge by making a better glove

# What is the Centennial Challenges Program?



- NASA STMD's Centennial Challenges Program, initiated in 2005, named after Wright Brothers' Kitty Hawk flight
- Engages public in advanced technology development
- Prizes for solving problems of interest to NASA and the nation
- Competitors based in US; not supported by government funding.
- Since 2005, there have been eight challenge categories, resulting in more than 20 challenge events to date.
- More than \$6 million in prize money has been awarded to more than 17 different teams
- Summer 2013, work began on Cube Quest Challenge



## Current Centennial Challenges:

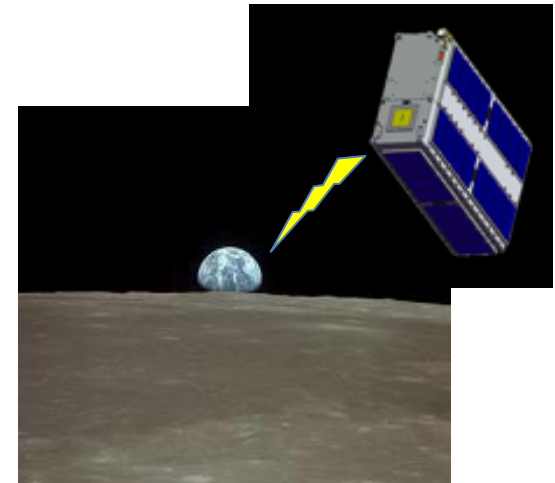
- Sample Return Robot
- 3-D Printed Habitat
- Mars Ascent Vehicle
- Cube Quest



# Why a Cube Quest Challenge?



- CubeSats are smaller in: cost, mass, volume, risk
- Constellations of cooperative, little satellites > single, conventional satellites
- Cube Quest incentivizes progress of CubeSats for deep space:
  - Long distance, high bandwidth comm
  - Navigation and pointing - without GPS or Earth's magnetic reference
  - Thermal management outside Earth's albedo
  - Survival in radiation beyond LEO

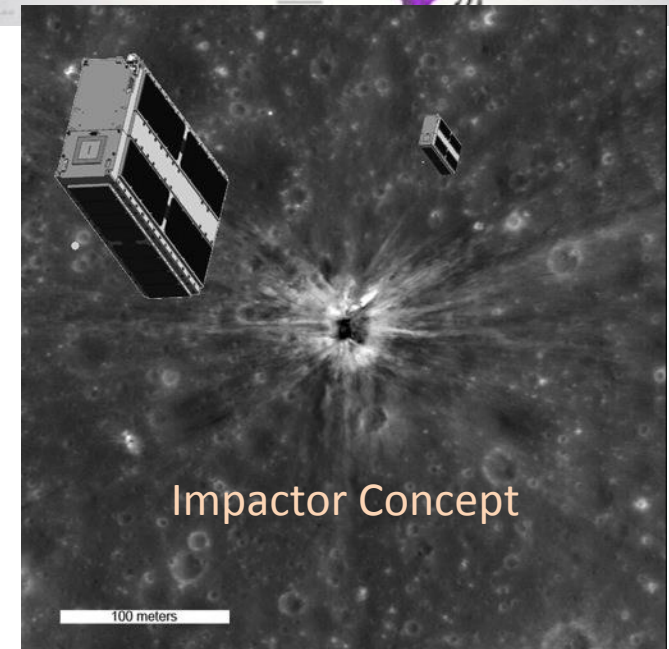


## How Can CubeSats Enable Future Missions Faster and More Affordably?

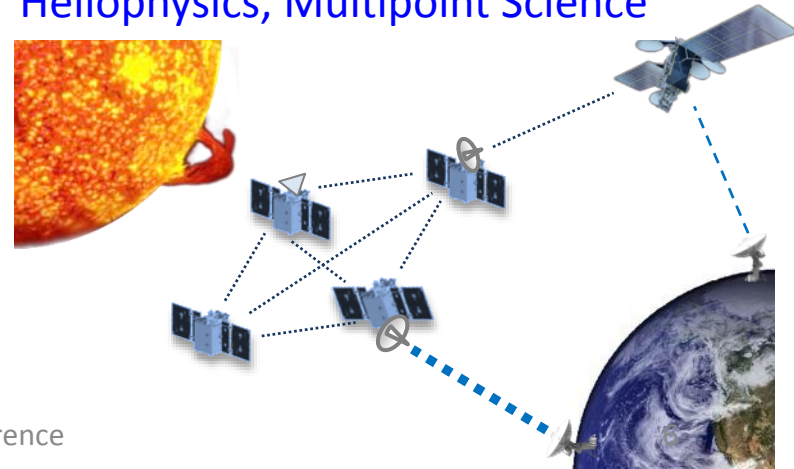
# Who Benefits from Advanced CubeSats?



- **Astrophysics:**
  - Distributed RF and Optical Arrays on affordable satellite constellation
  - Affordable, time-correlated (simultaneous) multi-point observations of NEOs (mass density, albedo, etc)
- **Planetary Explorations:**
  - Distributed measurements (Ex: surface seismographic; Mars “weather systems”, multi-site impactors to detect lunar subsurface volatiles, etc.)
  - Co-ordinated assets (Ex: landers paired with orbiting relays)
- **Heliophysics:**
  - Global coverage
  - Multiple observations of transient events (Ex: radio occultation)
  - Geographically distributed time-correlated “space weather” measurements
- **Earth Science**
  - Global coverage (multiple)
  - Time correlated weather, oceanic observations
- **DoD**
  - Global coverage
  - Rapid response
  - System-level redundancy; high reliability



## Heliophysics, Multipoint Science



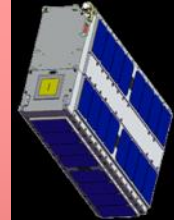
# What's the Cube Quest Challenge?



Get your CubeSat to the Moon  
– or far beyond –

Work the best. Survive the longest. Win prizes.

Goal: to foster innovation in small spacecraft navigation, operations, and communications techniques for deep space



CubeSat limited to 6U  
and 14 kg

Qualify for EM-1  
launch  
– or –  
get your own ride

## Lunar Derby

While in lunar orbit

**Achieve Lunar Orbit-**  
*\$1.5M/shared, \$1M max per team*

### **Error-free Communication**

*Burst Rate- \$225k/25k  
Total Volume- \$675k/75k*

### **Longevity**

*\$450k/50k*

## Deep Space Derby

While range  $\geq 4M$  km

**Farthest Distance**  
*\$225k/25k*

### **Error-free Communication**

*Burst Rate- \$225k/25k  
Total Volume- \$675k/75k*

### **Longevity**

*\$225k/25k*

## Ground Tournaments (GT)

4 Rounds

Approx every 6 months

Top 5 teams receive  
incremental funding  
(max \$100k per team)

Top 3 teams launch free on  
EM-1

**\$5.0M  
Prize Money**

# CubeQuest Operations and Rules



## SLS Safety and Interface Requirements

- SLS Payload Safety Reviews (to fly on EM-1)
- Or equivalent, for 3<sup>rd</sup>-party launches

## Any allowable part of the spectrum

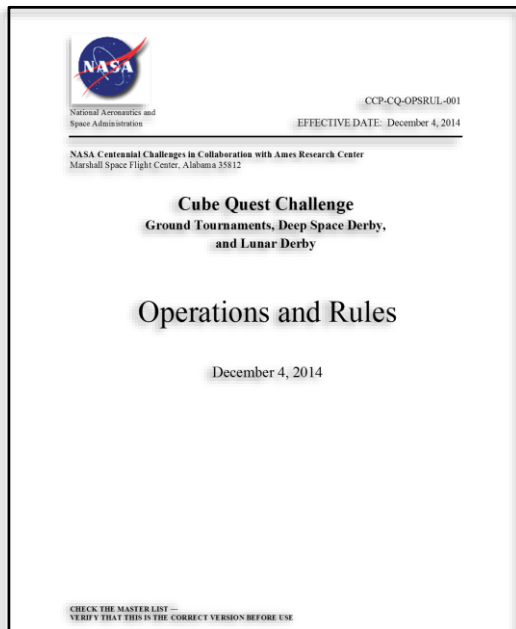
- subject to FCC public freq. alloc. and licensing regs

## Comm data eligible for prizes

- May use NASA DSN – at your cost
- DSN tracks all trajectories; checks lunar orbit, 4M km range
- Comm data format per Rules, to qualify

## Comply with Orbital Debris and Planetary Protection laws and regs

<http://www.nasa.gov/cubequest/reference>





# Who Can Compete?

- US citizens, permanent residents, and US-based entities
- No federal employees, within their employment scope
- Register per rules
- Compete in any, or all, Ground Tournaments
- Your team can enter and win!



<http://www.nasa.gov/cubequest/howtoenter>

# What is EM-1?



06Aug2016

- NASA's first non-crewed lunar flyby mission of Orion from SLS
  - Launch in late 2018
- Capacity for thirteen 6U-sized CubeSats
- Secondary Payloads deploy after Orion departure into lunar flyby trajectory

# SLS Configuration



## Orion:

Carries astronauts into deep space

## Stage Adapter:

The Orion MPCV Stage Adapter will be the first new SLS hardware to fly.

## Interim Cryogenic Propulsion Stage:

Based on the Delta IV Heavy upper stage; the power to leave Earth

## Core Stage:

Newly developed for SLS, the Core Stage towers more than 200 feet tall

## Solid Rocket Boosters:

Built on Space Shuttle hardware; more powerful for a new era of exploration

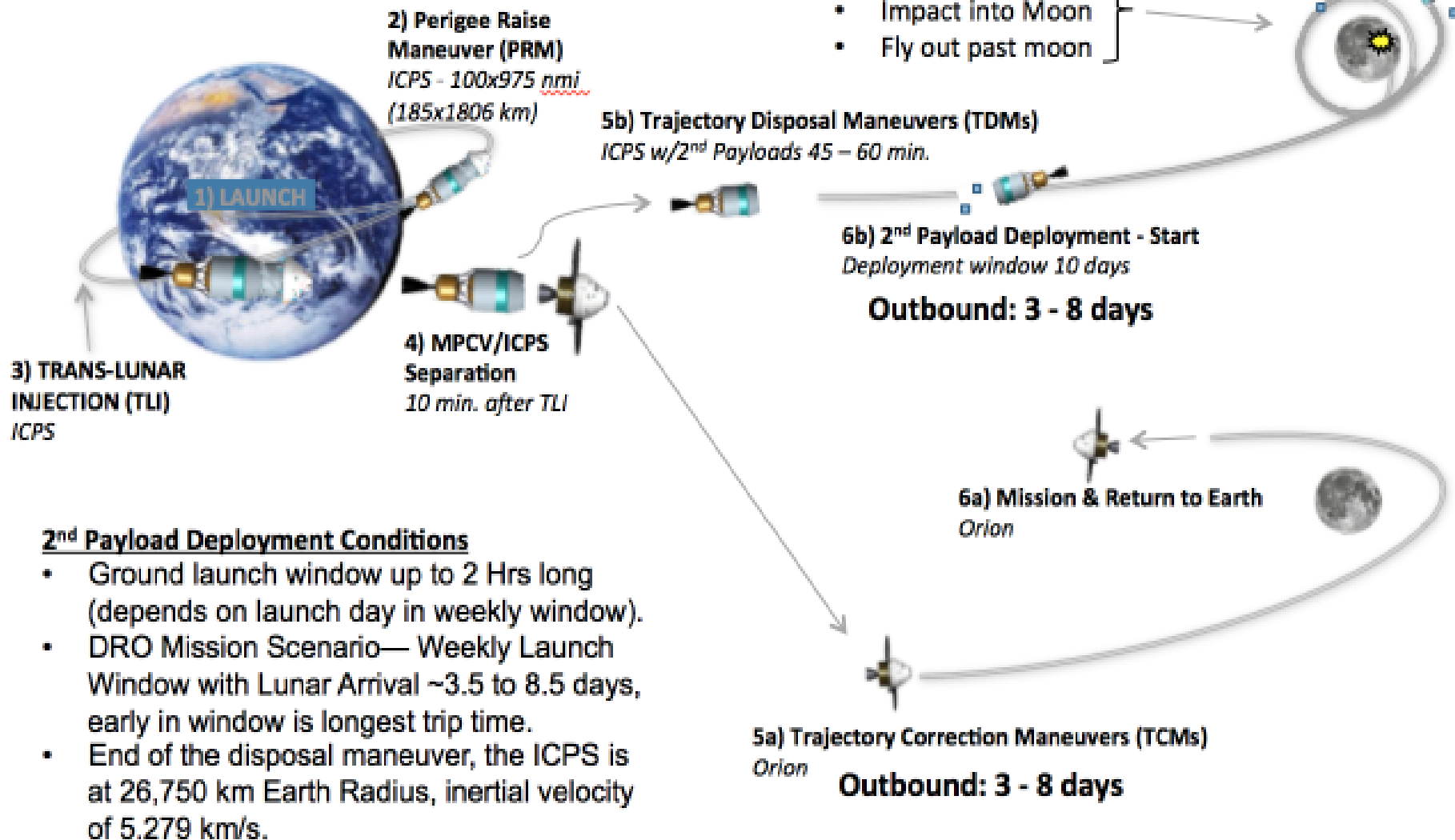
## RS-25 Engines:

Space Shuttle engines for the first four flights are already in inventory

# What is EM-1?

## Total Payload Deployment System

Mission Duration: 10 days



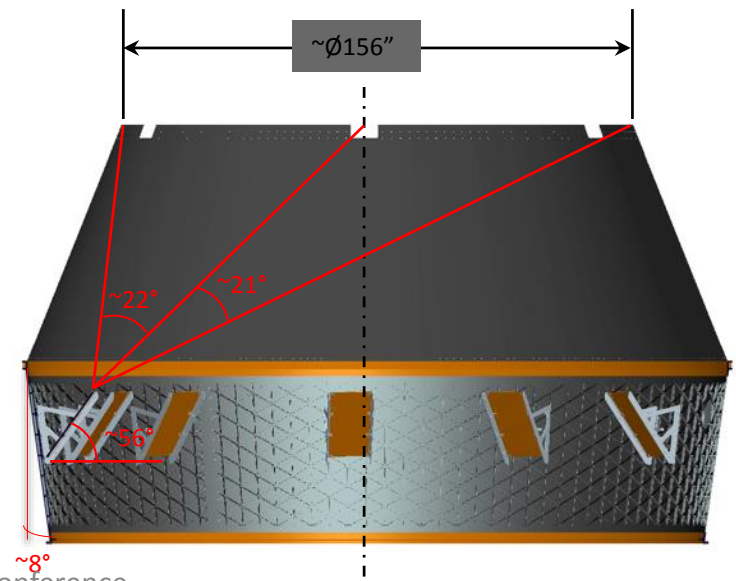
# SLS Secondary Payload Accommodations

Eleven 6U/12U payload locations  
6U volume/mass is the current standard  
(14 kg payload mass)

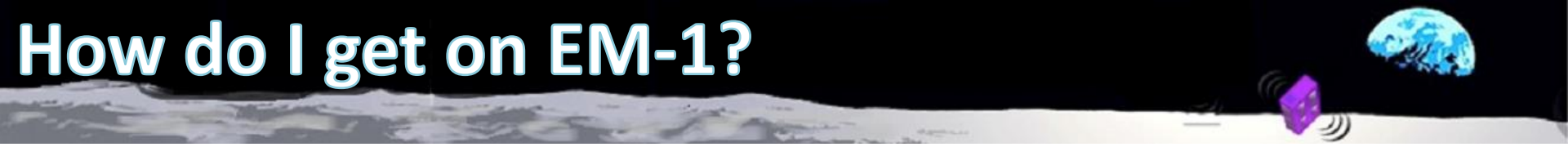
Payloads will be “powered off” from  
turnover through Orion separation and  
payload deployment

Payload Deployment System Sequencer;  
payload deployment will begin with pre-  
loaded sequence following MPCV  
separation and ICPS disposal burn

Payload requirements captured in  
Interface Definition and Requirements  
Document





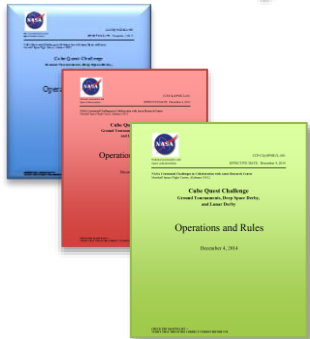


# How do I get on EM-1?

## Top 3 qualified GT-4 Winners offered free EM-1 launch

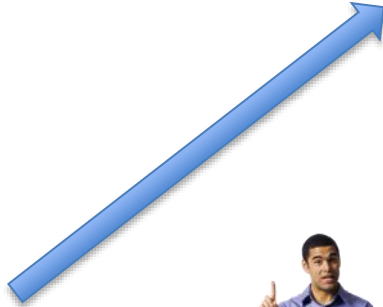
- Declare intent to fly EM-1
  - Be a top five winner in GT-1 and/or GT-2
  - Pass SLS payload safety reviews
  - Compete and win in GT-4
- Four Ground Tournaments (GTs)
    - GT-1 - Aug 2015 - \$20k - winners announced!
    - GT-2 - Mar 2016 - \$30k – winners announced!
    - GT-3 - Oct 2016 - \$30k
    - GT-4 - Mar 2017 - \$20k *and* chance to launch on EM-1
  - Teams may compete in any or all four GTs
    - they get harder as they go!

# How Ground Tournaments Work



- Rules
- GT Workbook
- SLS IDRD
- SLS Safety Rqts (or equiv. launch provider rqts)

Team of technical SMEs



5 Judge Panel

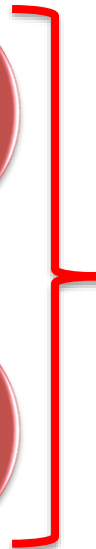
- 2 NASA
- 3 Non-NASA leaders
  - Industry
  - Academic
  - DoD



40%  
Likelihood  
of Mission  
Success



60%  
Compliance  
with Rules,  
SLS IDRD,  
SLS Safety  
Rqts



Total GT  
Score

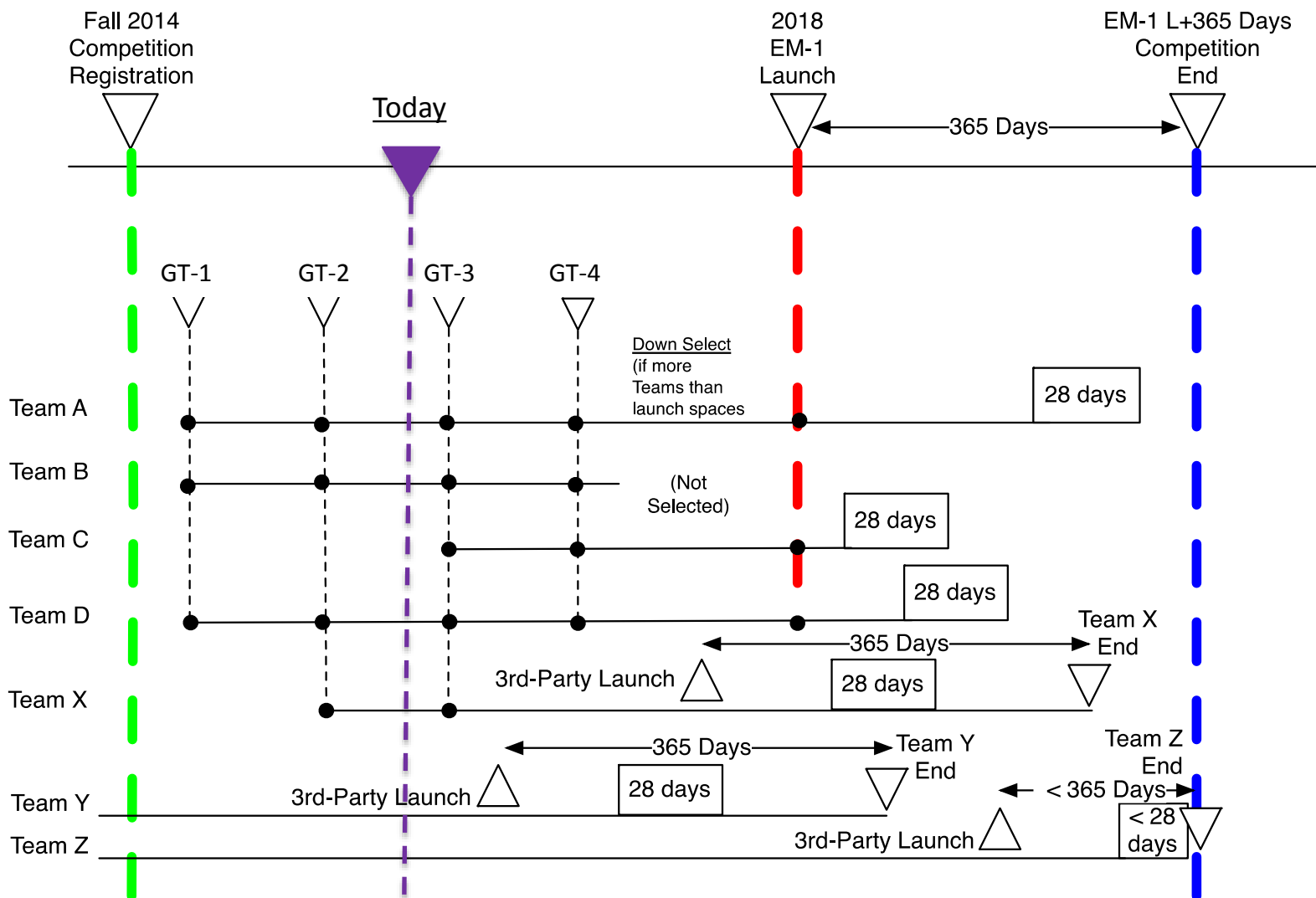


**GT Winners:**

Top 5 Teams  
Scoring > 3.0/5.0



# What's the Schedule?





\* - indicates EM-1 Qualifier

## Industry

**Alpha CubeSat Xtraordinary**  
Innovative Space Partnerships,  
Inc.

**\*Heimdallr**  
Ragnarok Industries, Inc

**\*Team Miles**  
Fluid & Reason LLC

## Academia

**\*Cislunar Explorers**  
Cornell University

**\* MIT KitCube**  
Massachusetts Institute of Technology

**\* SEDS UC San Diego**  
University of California- San Diego

**G.O.A.T.S.**  
Worcester Polytechnic Institute

**\* CU-E3**  
University of Colorado – Boulder

# What's the Status?



- **Registration is Open for GT-3**

- September 21, 2016
  - Registration Deadline and Submittals due date
- Winners announced in October 2016

- **Final Ground Tournament**

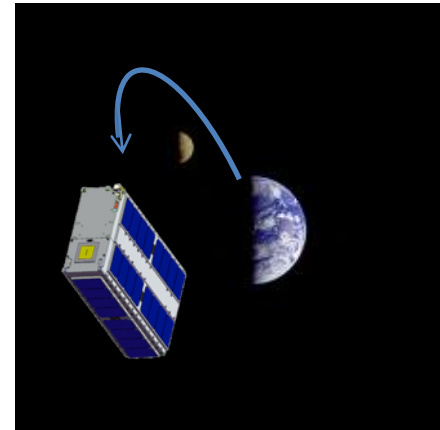
- In-Person at Ames Research Center in March 2017

<http://www.nasa.gov/cubequest/howtoenter>





# Questions?



Jim Cockrell

Cube Quest Challenge Administrator

[ARC-CubeQuestChallenge@mail.nasa.gov](mailto:ARC-CubeQuestChallenge@mail.nasa.gov)

# CubeQuest CHALLENGE

A NASA CENTENNIAL CHALLENGES COMPETITION

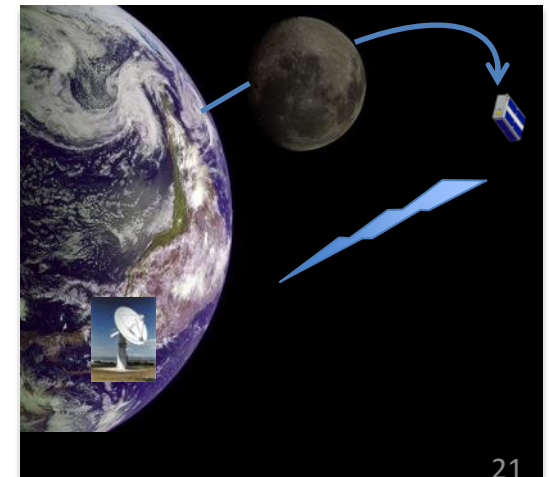


Good Luck and  
May the Best CubeSat Win!

# Deep Space Communications

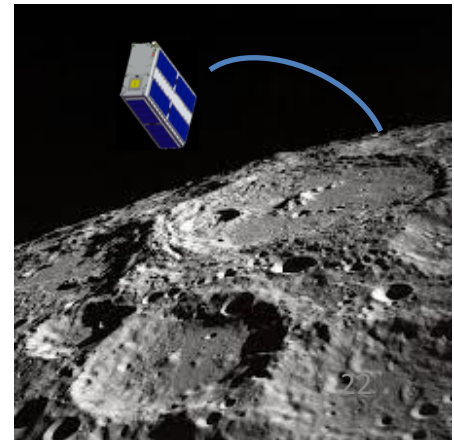


- Challenge:
  - [Farthest distance, largest volume, fastest rate - transmitted data](#)
- Demonstrates:
  - Comm: award for farthest comm on certain date
  - Ground Stations: challengers can provide their own deep space ground stations, off-loading heavily subscribed DSN assets
  - Survival: award for farthest comm
  - Power: survival in cold environment
  - Pointing: aim directional antenna, camera
  - Propulsion, G&NC to point antennas
- Applications:
  - Planetary missions
  - NEO/NEA surveyor/precursor





- Challenge:
  - [\*Achieve verifiable lunar orbit\*](#)
  -
- Demonstrates:
  - Propulsion: 700-900 m/s  $\Delta V$  for Lunar Orbit Injection
  - Pointing: hi-gain antenna, articulated solar arrays
  - G&NC: navigate without benefit of GPS or Earth's magnetic references
  - Power: perform while coping with lunar and Earth eclipse periods
  - Survival: achieve orbits and survive longest
- Applications:
  - NEO missions
  - Earth Science
  - Pathfinders, In-situ resource surveyors
  - Heliophysics
  - Planetary science
  - Lunar Science



# Longevity

- Challenge:
  - [Survive the longest in lunar orbit or 4M km range](#)
  -
- Demonstrates:
  - Rad tolerance in deep space (where CubeSats have not ventured before)
  - Power generation and management away from Earth
  - Thermal management in deep space
  - G&NC: point antennas without benefit of GPS or Earth's magnetic references
  - G&NC and propulsion: station keeping while in lunar orbit
  - Long distance communications, command and control
  - Autonomy
- Applications:
  - NEO missions
  - Earth Science
  - Pathfinders, In-situ resource surveyors
  - Heliophysics
  - Planetary science

